

JOINT STATEMENT OF THE WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE,  
PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE AND  
THE TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION  
March 26, 1993  
(Tucson, Arizona)

THANK YOU FOR BEING HERE TODAY.

AT THIS TIME WE WISH TO RESPOND TO THE NEWS RELEASE OF MARCH 22, 1993 ISSUED BY THE SECRETARY OF INTERIOR OUTLINING HIS THREE PRINCIPLES ON INDIAN GAMING NEGOTIATIONS FOR ARIZONA.

WE SINCERELY APPRECIATE THE SECRETARY'S ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE THE GAMING ISSUES WITHIN HIS HOME STATE. WE FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE SECRETARY IS MANDATED BY HIS TRUST RESPONSIBILITY TO THE THREE MEDIATED TRIBES, AND TO ALL INDIAN TRIBES, TO PROTECT AND PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF THE COMPACTS APPROVED BY THE FEDERAL COURT APPOINTED MEDIATOR.

THE INDIAN GAMING REGULATORY ACT (IGRA) REQUIRES THAT AFTER NEGOTIATIONS FAIL BETWEEN THE STATE AND TRIBES BOTH PARTIES GO TO MEDIATION. THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR MUST ALSO PRESCRIBE POLICY AND PROCEDURES IN CONSULTATION WITH THE AFFECTED INDIAN TRIBES IF GOVERNOR SYMINGTON DOES NOT SIGN OUR COMPACTS AFTER MEDIATION.

AS WE MOVE FORWARD AT THIS TIME WE ARE WAITING FOR THE GOVERNOR OF ARIZONA TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO SIGN THE COMPACT. WHILE WE DID HAVE A COUPLE OF BRIEF MEETINGS WITH SECRETARY BABBITT LAST WEEK, WE FEEL THAT FURTHER CONSULTATION IS NECESSARY. WHAT IS INVOLVED HERE IS OUR INHERENT RIGHT TO SELF-GOVERNMENT AND OUR MORAL OBLIGATION TO PROTECT OUR TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY.

THE WHITE MOUNTAIN APACHE TRIBE, THE PASCUA YAQUI TRIBE AND THE TOHONO O'ODHAM NATION OF ARIZONA WILL WORK WITHIN THE COMPACTS SELECTED BY THE FEDERAL MEDIATOR JUSTICE FRANK GORDON.

ON JANUARY 25, 1993, BRUCE BABBITT, IN HIS FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE AS THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR, SAID THAT HE BELIEVED IN THREE PRINCIPLES FOR THE FOUNDATION OF THE FUTURE EVOLUTION OF THE RELATIONSHIP WITH INDIAN TRIBES AND COMMUNITIES, AND I QUOTE:

- "1) RECOGNITION AND RESPECT FOR THE REALITY OF TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY.
- 2) RESPECT FOR THE TRUST RESPONSIBILITY OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND DILIGENT CARE FOR ITS EXECUTION; AND
- 3) ATTENTION TO THE NATURE OF THE GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIP."

THE SECRETARY FURTHER STATED:

"I WILL WORK TO CARRY OUT THE DEPARTMENT'S TRUST RESPONSIBILITY FOR AMERICAN INDIAN COMMUNITIES BY DEALING OPENLY, FAIRLY, AND FRANKLY WITH INDIAN TRIBES ON A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT BASIS, RESPECTING TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY AND WORKING TO IMPROVE THE ABILITY OF TRIBAL GOVERNMENTS TO SERVE INDIANS."

WE LOOK FORWARD TO FUTURE DISCUSSIONS WITH THE SECRETARY ALONG THESE PRINCIPLES.

EARLY NEXT WEEK THE MEDIATED TRIBES WILL DELIVER TO THE SECRETARY A COUNTER-PROPOSAL THAT IS REASONABLE YET PRESERVES THE INTEGRITY OF THE COMPACTS APPROVED BY THE MEDIATOR.